

approximately 2.5 to 20 dry weight percent dried, non-living yeast, and

(Q1 cont'd.) approximately 25 to 98 dry weight percent protein concentrate;

wherein the viability of the bacteria in the composition does not decrease for a period of at least ten months when the composition is stored in an airtight container.

(Q2) 18. The composition of claim 16, wherein the viable bacteria are selected from the genera or species consisting of *Lactobacillus*, *Streptococcus lactis*, *Streptococcus cremoris*, *Streptococcus diacetylactis*, *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Streptococcus faecium*, *Streptococcus faecalis*, *Pediococcus*, *Leuconostoc*, and *Propionibacterium freudenreichii shermanii*.

Please add new claims 25 - 32:

(Q3) 25. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the viability of the bacteria in the composition does not decrease for a period of at least twelve months when the composition is stored in an airtight container.

(Q3 cont'd.) 26. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the viability of the bacteria in the composition does not decrease for a period of at least eighteen months when the composition is stored in an airtight container.

27. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the viable dried bacteria component comprises from about 0.25% to about 5.0% of the dry weight of the composition.

28. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the viable dried bacteria component comprises from about 0.35% to about 0.75% of the dry weight of the composition.

Q 3 candid
29. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the non-living dried yeast component comprises from about 3.0% to about 12.5% of the dry weight of the composition.

30. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the non-living dried yeast component comprises from about 4.0% to about 7.5% of the dry weight of the composition.

31. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the protein component comprises from about 50% to about 97% of the dry weight of the composition.

32. (NEW) The composition of claim 16, wherein the protein component comprises from about 75% to about 96% of the dry weight of the composition.